

REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the non-final Office Action dated May 7, 2009, issued in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 1, 3-17 were previously pending in the present application. With this Amendment, claim 9 has been amended; and claims 1, 3-8 and 15-17 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter therein. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the claims. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 3-14 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. First, the Examiner objects to the phrase “said respective units” in claims 1 and 9. Additionally, the Examiner objects to the limitation “a memory unit in which programs for causing said respective units to function are stored,” recited in claims 1 and 9. Claims 3-8, 10-13 and 17 have been rejected based on their respective dependencies from claims 1 and 9.

As noted above, claims 1, 3-8 and 15-17 have been canceled thereby rendering the above rejections to those claims moot. Additionally, the Applicants have amended independent claim 9 to clarify the limitations noted above by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the objection to claims 1-3-14 and 17 is now respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 9-14 have been indicated as allowable if amended to address the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112. As noted above, claim 9 has been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112. Accordingly, claims 9-14 should now be in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has made the following prior art rejections to the claims: claims 1, 3-5 and 15-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akiyama et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,430,594, hereafter “Akiyama”) in view of Anderson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,628,013, hereafter “Anderson”); claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable of Akiyama in view of Anderson, and further in view of Goldick (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0093457, hereafter “Goldick”); claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akiyama in view of Anderson and Goldick, and further in view of Hoogerbrugge (U.S. Publication No. 2006/0069738, hereafter “Hoogerbrugge”); and claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akiyama in view of

Anderson, and further in view of D'Souza (U.S. Patent No. 6,052,707).

As noted above, claims 1, 3-8 and 15-17 have been canceled thereby rendering the above rejections to those claims moot. The only claims now remaining in the present application are claims 9-14, which are in condition for allowance.

In view of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record. Thus, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections presented in the outstanding Office Action, and pass the application to issue. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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